

Appl. No.: 10/052,094
Amtd. Dated: July 22, 2004
Reply to Final Rejection of April 23, 2004

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Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method performed by a hub for bypassing an access blocking apparatus and thereby enabling a first device to allow communications from any of a plurality of second device devices wherein the first device is on a local network and the second device is devices external to the local network, the local network including the access blocking apparatus that connects the local network to external networks and that separates the first and second devices, said method comprising:

- terminating a virtual pipe from the first device,
- assigning an IP address to the first device and associating this IP address with the virtual pipe,
- receiving communications originated by any of the second device devices and addressed to said IP address,
- routing the communications addressed to said IP address to the virtual pipe, and
- tunneling the communications over the virtual pipe to the first device thereby bypassing the access blocking apparatus.

Claim 2 (cancelled).

Claim 3 (cancelled).

Claim 4 (cancelled).

Claim 5 (cancelled).

Claim 6 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

- terminating a second virtual pipe from one of the second device devices,
- assigning a second IP address to the one of the second device devices, and
- receiving the communications from the one of the second device devices through the second virtual pipe.

Claim 7 (cancelled).

Claim 8 (currently amended): A system for bypassing an access blocking apparatus and thereby enabling communications between a first device and any of a plurality of second device devices wherein the first device is on a local network and the second device is devices

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are external to the local network, the local network including the access blocking apparatus that connects the local network to external networks and that separates the first and second devices, said system comprising:

a secure hub, and

a virtual pipe between the first device and said secure hub,

said secure hub including a pool of available IP addresses from which an IP address can be assigned to the first device, and further comprising means for associating the assigned IP address with the virtual pipe, means for routing communications from any of the second device devices and addressed to the first device to the virtual pipe, and means for tunneling said communications over the virtual pipe to the first device thereby bypassing the access blocking apparatus.

Claim 9 (cancelled).

Claim 10 (currently amended): The system of claim 8 further comprising:

a virtual pipe between one of the second device devices and said secure hub, and wherein said means for associating associates a second IP address from the pool of available IP addresses with the second virtual pipe, and wherein said means for tunneling tunnels said the communications from the one of the second device devices through the second virtual pipe.

Claim 11 (cancelled).

Claim 12 (currently amended): A system for enabling communication from any of a plurality of second communication device devices that is are external to a local network through a public network and bypassing a security access blocking apparatus to a first communication device on the local network, wherein said security access blocking apparatus provides the first communication device access to the public network and separates the first and second communication devices, said system comprising

a secure hub having routing and switching functionality and pipe termination functionality and having interfaces to said public network, and

means for creating a virtual pipe between said secure hub and said first communication device for tunneling communication and bypassing said security access blocking apparatus,

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said secure hub further including means for assigning an IP address to said first communication device and associating said IP address with said virtual pipe.

Claim 13 (cancelled).

Claim 14 (cancelled).

Claim 15 (cancelled).